

Message Text

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S E C R E T KINSHASA 1673

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DEPT PASS SECDEF/ISA/DSAA,/USEUCOM J4/7, CAIRO FOR UNDER
SECRETARY ROBINSON AND PLS BRING TO ATTN OF AMB CUTLER

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PFOR, CG, AO, US

SUBJECT: REQUEST FOR INCREASED MILITARY ASSISTANCE TO ZAIRE

REF: (A) KINSHASA 1600 (B) KINSHASA 1663

1. OVER THE THREE YEARS, MOBUTU HAS ASKED US FOR SIGNIFICANT MILITARY ASSISTANCE, AND WITH THE APPEARANCE OF THE SOVIET/CUBAN CAPABILITY ON HIS ANGOLAN FLANK--HIS PLEAS HAVE INCREASED IN MAGNITUDE AND IN URGENCY. OUR INCREASE OF FY-76 FMCR TO \$19 MILLION WAS VERY FAVORABLY RECEIVED BY MOBUTU, AS AN INDICATION OF OUR INTENT TO SUPPORT HIM OVER THE LONG RUN. BUT THAT \$19 MILLION IS BEING USED FOR A C-130, CESSNAS, TRUCKS AND JEEPS AND MINIMAL COMMUNICATIONS GEAR. THESE ARE RATIONAL PURCHASES WHICH FILL AN URGENT NEED ON THE TRANSPORTATION SIDE AND WILL FIT INTO THE ORIGINAL ROCKWELL PLAN OVER THE LONGER TERM. THE \$19 MILLION AND OUR CURRENT PROJECTIONS FOR FMS HOWEVER DO NOT RESPOND EITHER IN SOPHISTICATION OR TIMING TO MOBUTU'S NEEDS. HIS AIDE MEMOIRE AND THE LIST OF EQUIPMENT INCLUDED THEREWITH (REF (B)), MAKE THIS POINT.

2. THE NGUZA AND ENGULU MISSIONS TO THE US, EUROPE AND ASIA WERE ALSO AIMED AT PRODUCING A SIGNIFICANT INCREASE IN ECONOMIC, MILITARY AND DIPLOMATIC SUPPORT IN THE IMMEDIATE FUTURE WHEN ZAIRE FACES THREATS TO ITS ECONOMIC AND MILITARY SECURITY. IF HE

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GETS THE KIND OF BACKING HE IS LOOKING FOR, IT IS MY JUDGMENT

THAT HE WILL STAND PLL IN CENTRAL AFRICA, CONTINUE TO OPPOSE SOVIET/CUBAN PRESENCE AND PURSUE HIS MODERATE APPROACH TO THE EXPLOSIVE SOUTH AFRICAN QUESTIONS THAT ARE UPON US. IF HE PERCEIVES, HOWEVER, THAT HIS OLD FRIENDS WILL NOT COME THROUGH WITH SIGNIFICANT ASSISTANCE, THEN MOBUTU WILL ACCOMODATE TO THE CHANGED BALANCE OF POWER AND MAKE HIS DEALS AS BEST HE CAN.

3. FROM HERE IT LOOKS AS IF WE AND THE EUROVEANS WILL BE ABLE TO COME UP WITH THE KIND OF QUICK BALANCE OF PAYMENTS TO SUPPORT MOBUTU NEEDS IN THE SHORT RUN. SEPARATE MESSAGES ADDRESS THESE ASPECTS. BUT THERE REMAINS THE OBVIOUS PROBLEM OF TIMING AND MAGNITUDE ON THE MILITARY SIDE. GENERAL BABIA MET WITH CHIEF ZAMISH AFTER THE MOBUTU-ROENSON TALK TO GO OVER THE REQUEST FOR INCREASED ASSISTANCE AND HE SUGGESTED THAT WE SHOULD EITHER GET GEN. ROCKWELL BACK OUT HERE--OR SEND A ZAIRIAN MILITARY MISSION TO THE US (HIS PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE)--ASAP TO WORK OUT THE DETAILS ON RE-FASHIONING THE ROCKWELL REPORT AND FINDING WAYS TO GET THE EQUIPMENT HERE SOONEST. I HAVE NO PROBLEM WITH THIS REQUEST, PROVIDED WE ARE PREPARED TO ENTER INTO POSITIVE AND MEANINGFUL DISCUSSIONS, AND, IF WE ACCEDE DO THE IMMEDIATE DISPATCH OF A ZAIRIAN MISSION IT WOULD AT LEAST SHOW THAT WE ARE CONCERNED AND ANXIOUS TO SUPPORT.

4. THERE REMAINS THE QUESTION OF HOW QUICKLY IN FACT WE CAN INCREASE OUR MILITARY ASSISTANCE IN WAYS WHICH RESPOND TO MOBUTU'S REQUEST. WE ARE NOT IN A POSITION FROM THIS END TO RECOMMEND PRECISE ANSWERS, BUT THE SUGGESTION IN SEOUL'S 1328 THAT THE KOREANS MIGHT QUICKLY TRANSFER FMS, OR BETTER YET MAP, EQUIPMENT TO MOBUTU SEEMS WORTHY OF URGENT EXAMINATION. ANOTHER ROUNDABOUT, BUT PERHAPS QUICK ROUTE, MIGHT BE A FORTHCOMING ANSWER TO MOBUTU'S REQUEST FOR NATO ASSISTANCE IN UPGRADING INFRASTRUCTURE OF THE AIRFIELDS AT KAMINA AND KOLWEZI (KINSHASA 1662). IN ANY EVENT -- AS WE PURSUE WITH MOBUTU HIS OVERALL REQUEST FOR UPGRADING THE ROCKWELL REPORT, WE SHOULD MAKE SOME RAPID GESTURE WHICH WOULD SHOW THAT WE CAN RESPOND TO URGENT SITUATIONS. CHIEF ZAMISH BELIEVES, AND I AGREE BASED ON LISTENING TO MOBUTU'S REQUESTS FOR THE LAST YEAR AND A HALF, THAT THE RAPID DELIVERY AND TRAINING OF ONAIMECHANIZED INFANTRY BATTALION WOULD BE THE PROOF OF THE PUDDING.

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